

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-37 (Canceled)

38. (Currently Amended) A method of facilitating play of a group game, comprising:

in each of a plurality of plays of individual games played by a plurality of players at respective gaming machines, generating an outcome for the individual game, the outcome being one of a plurality of outcomes including at least ~~one specific outcome~~ a first set of outcomes and a second set of outcomes;

displaying ~~at least one~~ a first group of cells, each cell in ~~said at least one~~ the first group of cells capable of being designated with a designator in response to any player of the plurality of players achieving ~~the at least one specific outcome~~ an outcome in the first set of outcomes, wherein the designator indicates the gaming machine at which the ~~at least one specific outcome~~ outcome in the first set of outcomes was generated; and

designating a corresponding cell of ~~said at least one~~ the first group of cells with the designator responsive to ~~each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome~~ an occurrence of any outcome from the first set of outcomes;

displaying a second group of cells while displaying the first group of cells, each cell in the second group of cells capable of being designated with the designator in response to any player of the plurality of players achieving an outcome in the second set of outcomes, wherein the designator indicates the gaming machine at which the outcome in the second set of outcomes was generated; and

designating a cell of the second group of cells with the designator responsive to an occurrence of any outcome from the second set of outcomes;

wherein the first group of cells has associated therewith a first value payout and the second group of cells has associated therewith a second value payout different than the first value payout.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, further comprising ~~determining at least one payout to the plurality of players in relation to respective numbers of designated cells of a first group of cells of the at least one group of cells that correspond to each gaming machine~~ apportioning the first value payout among a first plurality of players if all of the cells in the first group of cells are designated; and

apportioning the second value payout among a second plurality of players if all of the cells in the second group of cells are designated.

40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 39, wherein ~~determining the at least one payout~~ apportioning the first value payout comprises apportioning the ~~at least one payout~~ first value payout according to respective numbers of designations in the designated cells of the first group of cells that correspond to each gaming machine of the first group of players.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 41, further comprising ~~distributing the at least one payout among the plurality of players according to the respective numbers of designations in the designated cells of the first group of cells that correspond to each gaming machine~~ distributing the first value payout to the first group of players.

43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, wherein the ~~at least one group of cells comprises two or more rows of cells~~ first group of cells comprises a first row of cells and the second group of cells comprises a second row of cells.

44. (Currently Amended) The method of claims ~~43~~ 38, ~~further comprising providing an award value associated with each row of the two or more rows of cells wherein the first group of cells comprises a first column of cells and the second group of cells comprises a second column of cells.~~

45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, further comprising configuring the ~~at least one~~ first group of cells as a group of playing card indicia and providing a playing card indicia of the group of playing card indicia for each cell of ~~said at least one~~ the first group of cells.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the individual game comprises draw poker.

47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~46~~ 38, wherein ~~the at least one first group of cells comprises four rows of cells, each row of cells comprising a row of playing card indicia, each row of playing card indicia comprising a different suit displaying the first group of cells comprises displaying a first group of playing card indicia having a first suit, and where displaying the second group of cells comprises displaying a second group of playing card indicia having a second suit.~~

48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 47, wherein each ~~different suit of the row of playing card indicia~~ of the first playing card indicia and the second playing card indicia comprises a hand including a Royal Flush.

49. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 48, wherein designating the corresponding cell of the first group of cells comprises designating a playing card indicia.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, wherein designating the playing card indicia comprises crowning the playing card indicia.

Claims 51-63 (Canceled)

64. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method, comprising:

receiving wagers from a plurality of players at respective gaming machines;

determining outcomes of individual games played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines;

displaying an image representative of a group game played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines, wherein the group game includes taking a first plurality of ordered steps toward a first group goal, wherein each step of the first plurality of ordered steps is attributable to any of the respective gaming machines of the plurality of players;

for each outcome from a first set of outcomes, displaying an image representative of taking one step of the first plurality of steps towards the first group goal, wherein the image representative of taking the one step of the first plurality of ordered steps towards the first group goal includes a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the first set of outcomes was determined;

providing a value payout associated with the group game based on the outcomes of the individual games played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines.

65. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 64, wherein the image representative of the group game comprises a plurality of cells arranged in an order, wherein each cell of the plurality of cells corresponds to each step of the first plurality of ordered steps;

wherein displaying the image representative of taking one step of the first plurality of ordered steps towards the first group goal comprises designating a next cell in the order ~~the cell of the plurality of cells corresponding to the step of the first plurality of steps~~ with the

designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the first set of outcomes was determined.

66. (Canceled)

67. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 65, wherein each outcome of the first set of outcomes corresponds to a respective cell of the plurality of cells.

68. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 67, wherein designating the cell of the plurality of cells comprises removing a previous designation, if any.

69. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 67, wherein designating the cell of the plurality of cells comprises not designating the cell if the cell was previously designated.

70. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 67, wherein designating the cell of the plurality of cells comprises designating the cell if the cell was previously designated, wherein the designated cell of the plurality of cells has associated therewith multiple designations.

71. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 64, wherein the first group goal includes achieving a predetermined number of outcomes from the first set of outcomes.

72. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 64, wherein the first group goal includes achieving each outcome from the first set of outcomes at least once.

73. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 64, wherein the group game includes taking a second plurality of ordered steps toward a second group goal during the same game as taking the first plurality of ordered steps toward the first group goal, wherein each step of the second plurality of ordered steps is attributable to any of the respective gaming machines of the plurality of players;

the method further comprising, for each outcome from a second set of outcomes, displaying an image representative of taking one step of the second plurality of ordered steps towards the second group goal, wherein the image representative of taking the one step of the second plurality of ordered steps towards the second group goal includes a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the second set of outcomes was determined.

74. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 73, wherein the first group goal has associated therewith a first value payout, and wherein the second group goal has associated therewith a second value payout different than the first value payout.

75. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 64, further comprising in response to outcomes from the first set of outcomes, attributing steps of the first plurality of ordered steps to the players at whose gaming machines the outcomes were determined;

wherein providing the value payout comprises apportioning the value payout among a set of players of the plurality of players to whom steps of the first plurality of steps are attributed.

76. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 75, wherein apportioning the value payout among the set of players is based on the number of steps of the first plurality of ordered steps attributed to each player of the set of players.

77. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 75, wherein each step of the first plurality of ordered steps is capable of being attributed to multiple players;

wherein each step of the first plurality of ordered steps corresponds to a portion of the value payout;

wherein apportioning the value payout among a set of players comprises apportioning each portion of the value payout to the one or more players attributed to the step corresponding to the portion of the value payout.

78. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 77, wherein each step of the first plurality of ordered steps is capable of being attributed to a single player multiple times;

wherein apportioning each portion of the value payout is based on the number of times a player is attributed to the step corresponding to the portion of the value payout.

79. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 64, wherein the individual games comprises at least one of a reel-type slot machine game, a poker game, a blackjack game, a keno game, a lotto game, and a bingo game.

80. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 64, further comprising displaying an image representative of an individual game played by one of the plurality of players.

81. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method, comprising:

receiving wagers from a plurality of players at respective gaming machines;

determining outcomes of individual games played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines;

displaying an image representative of a group game played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines, wherein the image representative of the group game comprises a first plurality of cells corresponding to a first group goal and a second plurality of cells corresponding to a second group goal, wherein each cell of the first plurality of cells and the second plurality of cells is attributable to any of the respective gaming machines of the plurality of players;

for each outcome from a first set of outcomes, designating a cell of the first plurality of cells with a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the first set of outcomes was determined;

for each outcome from a second set of outcomes, designating a cell of the second plurality of cells with a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the second set of outcomes was determined;

providing a first value payout if the first group goal is achieved; and

providing a second value payout different from the first value payout if the second group goal is achieved.

~~providing a value payout associated with the group game based on the outcomes of the individual games played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines.~~

82. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 81, wherein the first group goal includes achieving a predetermined number of outcomes from the first set of outcomes.

83. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 82, wherein a number of designated cells of the first plurality of cells corresponds to a number of outcomes from the first set of outcomes achieved by the plurality of players.

84. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 83, wherein the first plurality of cells is arranged in an order;

wherein designating the cell of the first plurality of cells comprises designating a next cell in the order.

85. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 84, wherein the image representative of the group game includes a ladder, the ladder comprising the first plurality of cells, the ladder having a bottom and a top;

wherein designating the cell from the first plurality of cells comprises designating the next undesignated cell from the bottom of the ladder.

86. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 85, further comprising:

if the next undesignated cell is designated, displaying an image of a figure on the ladder moving toward the top by one cell.

87. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 84, wherein the image representative of the group game includes a lane, the lane comprising the first plurality of cells, the lane having a beginning and an end;

wherein designating the cell from the first plurality of cells comprises designating the next undesignated cell from the beginning of the lane.

88. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 87, further comprising:

if the next undesignated cell is designated, displaying an image of an object on the lane moving toward the end by one cell.

89. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 88, wherein the object on the lane is a car.

90. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 81, wherein each cell of the first plurality of cells corresponds to at least one outcome from the first set of outcomes.

91. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 90, wherein the achieving the first group goal corresponds to designating all of the cells in the first plurality of cells.

92. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 91, wherein designating the cell of the first plurality of cells comprises removing a previous designation, if any.

93. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 91, wherein designating the cell of the first plurality of cells comprises not designating the cell if the cell was previously designated.

94. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 91, wherein the image representative of the group game includes a plurality of playing cards, wherein each playing card of the plurality of playing cards comprises a respective cell of the first plurality of cells;

wherein designating the cell from the first plurality of cells comprises designating a playing card from the plurality of playing cards.

95. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 94, wherein designating the playing card comprises displaying a crown on the playing card.

96. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 81, wherein providing the first value payout comprises providing the first value payout when all of the cells of the first plurality of cells have been designated.

97. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 96, wherein providing the first value payout comprises apportioning the first value payout among players whose gaming machine corresponds to at least one of the designated cells in the first plurality of cells.

98. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 97, wherein the first value payout is apportioned based on the numbers of designated cells in the first plurality of cells corresponding to each gaming machine.

99. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 98, wherein each cell is capable of being designated to multiple gaming machines;

wherein each cell of the first plurality of cells corresponds to a portion of the first value payout;

wherein apportioning the first value payout comprises apportioning each portion of the first value payout to players whose gaming machines correspond to the designated cell in the first plurality of cells associated with the portion of the first value payout.

100. (Currently Amended) A group gaming method according to claim 99, wherein each cell of the first plurality of cells is capable of being attributed to a single player multiple times;

wherein apportioning each portion of the first value payout is based on the number of designations for each gaming machine corresponding to the designated cell associated with the portion of the first value payout.

101. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 81, further comprising displaying an image representative of an individual game played by one of the plurality of players.

102. (Canceled)

103. (Canceled)

104. (Previously Presented) A group gaming method according to claim 81, wherein the first individual game comprises at least one of a reel-type slot machine game, a poker game, a blackjack game, a keno game, a lotto game, and a bingo game.

105. (Currently Amended) A group gaming system comprising:

a plurality of gaming machines, each gaming machine of the plurality of gaming machines comprising:

a gaming machine controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to the processor, the gaming machine controller configured to:

receive a respective wager from a respective player;

display a respective image representative of a respective individual game played by the respective player;

determine a respective outcome of the respective individual game, the respective outcome of the respective individual game from a plurality of possible outcomes;

provide at least a portion of a value payout associated with a group game;

a display device communicatively coupled to the plurality of gaming machines, the display device comprising a display screen operatively coupled to a display device processor, the display device processor configured to:

cause the display screen to display an image representative of ~~the~~ a group game played by the players at the plurality of gaming machines, wherein the group game includes taking a ~~first~~ plurality of ordered steps toward a ~~first~~ group goal, wherein each step of the ~~first~~ plurality of steps is attributable to any of the gaming machines of the respective players,

for each outcome of the individual games from a ~~first~~ set of outcomes, cause the display screen to display an image representative of taking one step of the ~~first~~ plurality of ordered steps towards the ~~first~~ group goal, wherein the image representative of taking the one step of the ~~first~~ plurality of steps towards the ~~first~~ group goal includes a designation indicative of the gaming machine at which the outcome from the ~~first~~ set of outcomes was determined.

106. (New) A group gaming system comprising:

a plurality of gaming machines, each gaming machine of the plurality of gaming machines comprising:

a gaming machine controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to the processor, the gaming machine controller configured to:

receive a respective wager from a respective player;

display a respective image representative of a respective individual game played by the respective player;

determine a respective outcome of the respective individual game, the respective outcome of the respective individual game from a plurality of possible outcomes;

provide at least a portion of a value payout associated with a group game;

a display device communicatively coupled to the plurality of gaming machines, the display device comprising a display screen operatively coupled to a display device processor, the display device processor configured to:

display an image representative of a group game played by the plurality of players at the respective gaming machines, wherein the image representative of the group game comprises a first plurality of cells corresponding to a first group goal and a second plurality of cells corresponding to a second group goal, wherein each cell of the first plurality of cells and the second plurality of cells is attributable to any of the respective gaming machines of the plurality of players, wherein a first value payout is associated with achieving the first group goal, and wherein a second value payout different from the first value payout is associated with achieving the second group goal;

for each outcome from a first set of outcomes, designate a cell of the first plurality of cells with a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the first set of outcomes was determined; and

for each outcome from a second set of outcomes, designate a cell of the second plurality of cells with a designation indicative of the respective gaming machine at which the outcome from the second set of outcomes was determined.